AMENDMENT OF STANDING ORDERS.

Presentation of the report of the Select Committee.

Mr. S. Piraviperumal Pillai: Sir, in presenting the report of the Select Committee, appointed to consider the amendment of Standing Order No. 7, I move that the amendment may be accepted.

Mr. Kayalam Paramesvaran Pillai (*Additional Head Sirkar Vakil*): Does the member move for the *report* of the Select Committee being accepted or for the *amendment*?

Mr. S. Piraviperumal Pillai: The report, Sir.

President: I was about to ask that.

Mr. V. S. Arumukham Pillai: I second the motion, Sir.

President: The effect is that the amendment is withdrawn?

Mr. S. Piraviperumal Pillai: Yes Sir.

The amendment was, by leave, withdrawn.

RESOLUTIONS ON MATTERS OF GENERAL PUBLIC INTEREST.

Reduction of tax on wet lands in Nanjinad.

Mr. V. S. Arumukham Pillai: Sir, I beg to move the following resolution:

> "This Council recommends to the Government that, on account of the peculiar conditions prevailing in Nanjinad, tax on all wet lands, inclusive of water rate, be reduced by 50 per cent. till normal conditions are restored."

The tract known as *Nanjinad* comprises the taluks of Tovala and Agastisvaram, and is said to have been annexed to Travancore in the year 292 M. E. As the name itself indicates, the land has been noted for *Nanja* cultivation and has been rightly called the 'Grannery of Travancore'.

In fact, even now the main occupation and the only occupation, is *nanja* cultivation, chiefly paddy. In other words, the people of Nanjinad are mainly agricultural. Land is their only property and income from land is the only source of income. In short, *they live or die with the land.*

The people of Nanjinad have always been noted for their unstinting *loyalty* and devotion to our beloved sovereign and to our beloved country.

Unmindful of what is taking place elsewhere, they have been following their peaceful occupation—tilling the land, sowing the seed and reaping the harvest. The peculiar characteristic of the

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

people of Nanjinad cannot be better described than in the words of late Mr. Watts. Late Mr. Watts in a reply to an address presented to him, said of the people thus :

> "So long as you have water for irrigation, you are perfecely indifferent as to who governs the country, Rama or Ravana."

Till about a few years ago, they were leading a life of peace and contentment, satisfied with what they got for their bare maintenance, after paying the land-tax and meeting the cost of cultivation and other expenses.

So long as they could get something for their maintenance, they had no complaint, and there was no clamour. Quite willingly, they were paying the tax, though heavy and excessive it was.

Now that they are at their wit's end unable to eke out a living from land after paying the sirkar tax and the cultivation expenses, discontent has set in and they have begun to feel the pinch of the heavy and burdensome taxation.

Sir, it is now about six years since the economic depression set in. The prices of all agricultural produce, chiefly paddy, have been gradually falling. Paddy which was selling at 8 or 9 rupees per *kottah* during normal times came down to Rs. 5 and gradually at the present day to Rs. 3-as. 8. Taxes remaining the same, cost of cultivation remaining the same, the land holder is put to the painful necessity of selling double and treble the quantity of paddy. Is there a corresponding increase in the out-turn? Owing to innumerable causes, the out-turn has terribly gone down. The natural exhaustion of the soil, the closing of the forests as reserves depriving the poor ryots of green manure, the wholesale auctioning of the tank-beds depriving the people of grazing grounds, various factors as these, and, above all, the utter poverty of the people have contributed a great deal to the heavy fall in the out-turn.

Sir, even for the little paddy that the ryot gets, he is not able to find a market because of foreign competition. At the present moment when the ryot has to pay the tax in money he has to take the produce to a market where there is no demand and he is practically under the control of the trader. He has to accept a measure which the trader dictates. In spite of Regulations, in spite of rules and enactments, the measures that are being used by the trader are extremely uncertain. It is no exaggeration to say that there is actual starvation in the country. Indebtedness is heavily increasing.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

[Mr. V. S. Arumukham Pillai.]

Coming to taxation, Sir, if you will kindly compare Nanjinad with the other taluks of the State, you will find that, in the matter of taxation, Nanjinad is being treated with a step-motherly affection by the Government and that the taxes in Nanjinad are even heavier than those imposed on the fertile plains of the Indus, the Ganges and the Cauveri or anywhere else in India. Land there is assessed to Rs. 20 per acre while we in Nanjinad have to pay Rs. 25, Rs. 28, Rs. 30, Rs. 32 and even Rs. 35. Sir, it will be seen that the maximum burden on one acre of wet land in Nanjinad is Rs. 35, which, as I have had occasion to state before in this House, is one not obtaining anywhere under the sun excepting in this blessed land of charity. Sir, a kind reference to the Land Revenue Manual, Vol. III, at pages 300 and 301, will convince one how unequal the assessment in Nanjinad is. Sir, you will find that, for the first *tharam*, the tax in Nanjinad is Rs. 25-15-7 while in Shencotta for the first *tharam* the tax is Rs. 20-10-6, and in Quilon, Kottarakara and other places for the first *tharam* the tax is Rs. 17-10-7. Sir, why this difference—why this inequality? This inequality in the assessment of land-tax in Nanjinad existed from very early times and this will be seen from the statement made by the Honourable V. Ramaiengar. This is what he says :

> "The present inequality of assessment, such as it is, is another evil of great magnitude....."

President : In what document has that statement been made?

Mr. V. S. Arumukham Pillai : In the Land Revenue Manual.

President : You must draw the attention of the House to that particular document first.

Mr. V. S. Arumukham Pillai : I am reading the statement from the Land Revenue Manual :

> "The present inequality of assessment, such as it is, is another evil of great magnitude. Generally, to the north of Trivandrum the assessment of land is moderate. But in the southern taluks notably in Tovala and Agastisvaram, the burden is both onerous and unequal. Complaints of over-assessment and the incidence of the Government demand are frequent. The margin of profit is said to be small. There is no accumulation of capital. The bulk of the agricultural population are able to derive but a bare subsistence from the land. Without a more equal distribution of taxation and a moderately fixed assessment it is idle to expect any great extension of cultivation or economic progress."

Sir, as I have already submitted, the average tax for the first *tharam* in Nanjinad is Rs. 25-15-7. Now, what is the cost of

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

cultivation? The Economic Depression Enquiry Committee, at para 77 of their report, refer to the cost of cultivation in Nanjinad. This is what they say—

> "The minimum cost of production in Nanjinad varies from locality to locality. We may however put it down at Rs. 75 and the average cost at Rs. 84 per acre for both crops together."

Sir, taking the minimum cost of cultivation, that is Rs. 75, and the average tax, Rs. 25-15-7, the total amount comes to Rs. 100 and odd. What is the yield? The Economic Depression Enquiry Committee has further fixed the yield at 24 *kottas*. The price of 24 *kottas* at the present ruling rate of Rs. 3-8-0 comes to only Rs. 84. Now we find a deficit of Rs. 16-15-7. How are the ryots to eke out a living from land?

Rao Sahib Dr. N. Kunjan Pillai Has not the cost of cultivation gone down on account of fall in the price of articles since the Economic Depression Enquiry Committee's report?

Mr. V. S. Arumukham Pillai: I can say from my experience that, as a matter of fact, the cost of cultivation has not gone down. The wages remain the same and the hire for carts and the price of agricultural implements all remain the same.

Mr. A. Kumara Pillai: What about the cost of manure?

Mr. V. S. Arumukham Pillai: If there is a fall in the cost of manure, it will be only very little. If it was selling at 5 fanams before, it will now be four and a half fanams. That is all the difference. There is not a proportionate decrease in the cost of manure or in the cost of cultivation.

A pertinent question may be asked, Sir, why these people then cultivate the land? It is a habit. They cannot do away with it. Further, whether they cultivate it or not they have to pay the tax. Sir, it will be seen therefore that mere possession of land in Nanjinad is a burden and the tendency is now to fly away from the land altogether. I am not exaggerating things. Anyone conversant with the people and the life of the people in Nanjinad at present will be convinced of their real state of existence.

Sir, I will now refer to the history of these people, how they have undergone long ages of suffering. In Nagamiah's State Manual at page 323 we find the following with regard to the history of the people:

> "These edicts and the resolutions embodying them speak for themselves and do not require any comments here. The Nanjinad people became desperate. They were harassed on the one side by the marauders from the Pandyan kingdom and on the other by the king's officers who, when the former disappeared after plunder, put in their appearance only to demand fresh taxes for the so-called

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

[Mr. V. S. Arumukham Pillai.]

defence of the land. The spirit of lawless defiance to the king's authority engendered by this state of affairs reached its climax when the people openly met and resolved to take the life of any man who acted against the interests of the public therein assembled. Such a person was to be treated as a common enemy and dealt with accordingly. The people also more than once abandoned their houses and took to the neighbouring hills refusing to return to their villages unless the king promised to redress their grievances. Even service under the king was declared treason against the commonwealth of Nanjinad. To this day the people of Nanjinad are as a class distinguished from the other Travancoreans by a bold address and plain speaking to the authorities—an instinct inherited from long ages of suffering and resistance to mis-government. One of the most favoured forms of expressing grievances adopted by the people of the southern taluks to the sovereign is to say "Kindly allow us to go outside the Tovala frontier". As a matter of fact, they did go several times in former ages outside the Travancore frontier when oppression by the king's officials or depredations by foreign armies became intolerable; but every time they went, they were called back to their homes by the ancient kings who always cajoled them with sweet promises of sympathy and better protection."

Again, we find from the history of these people that, on account of the increasing taxation and over-taxation, assemblies were held and resolutions were passed. Four assemblies are stated to have been held and the last of them was held on 16th Kartikai 898 M.E. We find at page 321 of the State Manual, a copy of the resolutions passed by that assembly. The proceedings are as follows :—

"On account of the heavy taxes imposed on us and the cruel treatment which we were subjected to till the Kumbham harvest of 895 M. E. (1720 A. D.), we were forced to leave our fields uncultivated during the whole of the year 896 M. E. and retreat to the east of the mountains".

In this assembly the following resolutions were passed and I shall refer to a few of the important resolutions :

"We therefore pass the following resolutions—

'(1) That the taxes on the seed-bed lands and *kottappanam* cannot be paid.

(2) That we will bind ourselves to pay only the *anjali* and the other taxes originally existing on all our lands and cannot pay the *mathalpanam* imposed on *Devadanam*, *Brahmadanam*, etc.

(3) That we will be prepared to make a bold stand and resist by force if any measures be taken to enforce the unjust imposts, and even be willing to migrate into another country, leaving our Kumbham crop behind.

(4) That if any—be he the *pidayakar*, *oorkar*, *or ambalakar*—were to betray the proceedings of this assembly, being bribed by the Government officers, or consent to pay the unjust taxes, he shall be liable to pay with his person and property, the penalty for such gross treachery."

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

Mr. M. N. Paramesvaran Pillai : May I know from the member whether any of the threats were executed ?

Mr. V. S. Arumukham Pillai : These threats were executed. As a matter of fact, the people deserted their homesteads and went to the mountains. The king went there, camped at Bhuthapandy, entreated the people to come back and cancelled all the taxes and relieved them of their hardships. This is what we find from history.

Sir, the conditions now are not quite dissimilar, but I trust, and I am fully confident, that the people of Nanjinad will not now be driven to such extremities, for we have at the helm of affairs in Travancore one with vast experience of the conditions of the ryots, the conditions of the agricultural population and the conditions of agriculture, one who is fully alive to the real hardships of the people, and we hope that under his wise statesmanship the people of Nanjinad will have their grievances redressed.

Sir, I may refer in this connection to the solemn statement made by our Dewan in reply to an address which was presented by the ryots of Nanjinad. The ryots of Nanjinad in the hottest part of the day, at 12 noon, and in the hottest part of the month, namely Pankuni, presented an address to our Dewan when he first came to the Cape and in their address the ryots set forth all their grievances and our Dewan was pleased to sympathise with them and to make sympathetic statements. I hope, Sir, that the Dewan will translate his sympathetic words into practical action.

I have shown to you, Sir, that the real situation of the people of Nanjinad is simply lamentable and it is no exaggeration to say that they are now heavily sunk in indebtedness. All the jewels which they treasured up during their days of prosperity have all passed away from their hands and from their women and how far they are indebted will be seen from the report of the Banking Enquiry Committee.

The Banking Enquiry Committee has estimated the debt of an ordinary agricultural family at Nanjinad as Rs. 1,454, taking Tazhakudy as a model village.

President : The time allotted for the member has expired. If he proposes to read only some important extracts I will allow him some more time.

Mr. V. S. Arumukham Pillai : Sir, the report of the Banking Enquiry Committee fixes the debt of an agricultural family at Nanjinad at Rs. 1,454. Under the circumstances, and in view of the hard and miserable condition of the ryots in Nanjinad, the

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

[Mr. V. S. Arumukham Pillai.]

only tangible relief that can be done to them at present is granting an adequate and substantial remission of land tax. As I have submitted, the price of paddy has gone down above 50 per cent. and therefore it is just proper and most equitable that a reduction of at least 50 per cent. of the land tax should be made. That alone will touch the fringe of the problem in Nanjinad. Extension of credit by co-operative societies and Land Mortgage Banks will put off the evil day for a short period but it will ultimately increase the tax payers' heavy load of debt. But any permanent or tangible relief can be given only by a substantial reduction of tax. I will conclude my speech by quoting a few authorities. Mr. O. Coror, the late Director-General of Statistics in India, said :—

> "I have little doubt that any reduction in land revenue would be of far more value in the improvement of the clan who constitute the bulk of the population and who contribute more largely to the finances of the State."

Mr. Gokhale says :—

> "Whatever loss of revenue such a measure may cause directly to the State will be more than indirectly made up by a material improvement in the condition of the people."

In concluding, I appeal to the honourable members that they owe a duty not only to their own constituency but to the State as a whole, and Nanjinad being a link of the State, I hope and trust that they will extend their sympathy to the people of Nanjinad.

Mr. K. P. Nilakanta Pillai: I second the resolution. The learned mover has supported his resolution with all the necessary figures and facts. The question that Nanjinad is heavily taxed has been mooted by this House 9 years ago. When the matter was being agitated, the Government also were more or less convinced of the grievances of the people of Nanjinad and there was even the solemn assurance on the part of the Government that the question will be looked into. That agitation arose when there was the difficulty felt between the measures *kottah* and *para* in Nanjinad. Government also admitted that the taxation in Nanjinad is the highest and that it requires reduction. On that occasion we had the opportunity of studying comparatively the taxes that were in existence on wet lands in British India. I took some pains and I brought to the notice of the House that taxation in Nanjinad is the highest in the whole of India. There is only the geographical difference between Nanjinad and Tinnevelly, the British Indian district. I do not find any other difference between the wet lands of Nanjinad and the lands in the adjoining Tinnevelly District. On

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

equal fertile lands the maximum tax in Tinnevelly is only Rs. 16 per acre. Here the minimum comes between Rs. 20 and Rs. 25 and the maximum goes to Rs. 35. On that fact alone the House will more or less be convinced that the taxation on wet lands in Nanjinad is higher than in British India. The grievances of the Nanjinadians could more or less be understood from the speech of the mover of the resolution. He even indicated that there is a tendency on the part of the agriculturists of Nanjinad to give up agriculture as a vocation and to resort to some other method of living. During the summer recess I had been to South Travancore, exactly at the time when the Dewan visited the Cape, and those who went to the villages on the borders between Tinnevelly and Travancore would see that the wet lands beyond the Customs House were left uncultivated. The reasons may be several. Probably, they may not be in a position to cultivate or they cannot expect much return from the expensive cultivation which they have to undertake. It is a very pitiable sight to see these lands left uncultivated. Especially at this time when the cultivation itself could not be carried on without borrowed capital and when it brings nothing to the cultivator, Government ought to look into this matter without any delay.

Apart from this question, there is another serious injustice done to the cultivators of Nanjinad. We will discuss that when the next resolution is moved. The cultivators at Nanjinad are put to real hardship because they cannot find markets for the paddy they get from time to time. The Government have to consider that also very seriously. I am not trying to enter into the vexed question of finding markets for the paddy of the Nanjinad cultivators. Government ought to go a long way and see that, as far as possible, Travancore markets, at least, are made responsible for receiving the paddy produced in Nanjinad and for the distribution of it throughout Travancore. On account of the import of paddy from outside, a great deal of competition is going on. The cultivators find it very difficult to cultivate and even if cultivated to make both ends meet out of the profits which they can hope to obtain from it. There are manifold difficulties. The heaviest taxation, fall of price and the difficulty to cultivate lands due to the absence of manure, whether green manure or artificial, and the complicated situation on account of the mistaken notion about the *kottah* and the *para*, all these things now press on the cultivators at Nanjinad. Even though my friend Mr. Arumukham Pillai only said that there is a tendency on the part of the agriculturists to give up their lands, I think they have already begun to do so. The Government also would have been convinced of the arguments advanced

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

[Mr. K. P. Nilakanta Pillai.]

by Mr. Arumukham Pillai. They have not got proper statistics with regard to the taxes paid from wet lands and other taxes. I am sure they will not be able to get it. I myself have sent in an interpellation basing on this. Government have not replied and I do not think they will be able to answer it because they are not keeping the correct statistics with regard to that. People are parting with wet lands for whatever price they can fetch and all the retired officers from Trivandrum are acquiring lands in Nanjinad. Because the cultivators were in a position till now to pay the tax out of the proceeds, they did not grudge to do so. Many of the retired officers and some of the relatives of retired officers who own lands in Nanjinad now find it difficult to get their lands cultivated because their agreements with the cultivators are not kept up by the latter. The cultivation has become rather embarrassing. I do not want to advance any more reasons. This is the proper time for the Government to interfere in this matter, and in the absence of such interference, I think, some very great movement may result. Therefore it would be advisable that the Government interfere in this matter at this time and do some relief to the cultivators.

President : Moved and seconded " this Council recommends to the Government that, on account of the peculiar conditions prevailing in Nanjinad, tax on all wet lands, inclusive of water-rate, be reduced by 50 per cent. till normal conditions are restored."

Mr. M. N. Paramesvaran Pillai : I beg permission to move an amendment to this resolution. I have already sent up the amendment.

President : The Chair is already in possession of a copy of the amendment which the Honourable Member has sent. But I fear that it cannot be held within the ambit of the four corners of the scope of the resolution that is now before the House. The resolution, as Honourable Members will remember, restricts its intentions and purposes to lands in Nanjinad. And it further restricts even the lands in Nanjinad to tax on wet lands. Therefore the scope and purpose of the resolution is merely to move the Government to agree to a reduction of the taxation in respect of the lands in Nanjinad and again in respect of *wet* lands. But the amendment of which notice has been given embraces a far greater field than that which is covered by the resolution itself. The amendment asks that the word ' Nanjinad' occurring in the resolution be omitted and it further askes that the word ' wet ' appearing in the same resolution be omitted. In other words the object of the amendment is to bring under discussion questions relating to not *Nanjinad* but to the entire territory of Travancore.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

And further it is the intention of the amendment not to confine its operation to *wet* lands but to bring within the ambit of the discussion lands of all varieties in the whole territory of Travancore. This, as the House will remember, is contrary to the spirit of the requirements of an amendment. Under Section 68 (1) of the Manual, an amendment must be relevant to, and within the scope of the subject-matter of, the clause or motion to which it relates. This amendment is certainly not within the scope of the original resolution. It is entirely beyond its scope. It changes completely the face of the resolution ; and it includes within its ambit matters which are not germane to the original resolution. When the resolution was tabled by the mover, he had at the back of his mind merely a discussion in regard to the lands in Nanjinad and he had at the back of his mind wet lands. And as the House has already heard the speech of the mover and the seconder of the resolution, both of them have confined their arguments entirely to Nanjinad and the wet lands thereunder. Therefore, I am constrained to hold that the amendment is out of order.

Mr. Kochikal P. Balakrishnan Tampi (*Mavelikara and Kartikapalli* cum *Kunnattur*) : Sir, I rise to oppose the resolution moved by my friend Mr. Arumukham Pillai, not because that I lack in sympathy with the lot of the people of Nanjinad, but because the problem is such as would not allow a piecemeal treatment. The condition of the people of Onattukara, which constituency I have the honour to represent in this House, and also of Kuttanad is certainly as hard if not harder than that of the people of Tovala or Nanjinad. I am sure the Government would certainly take up the problem as a whole.

Mr. S. Piraviperumal Pillai : May I know from the member whether, by opposing the resolution, it will in any way ease the situation.

Mr. Kochikal P. Balakrishnan Tampi : Certainly. I have got the financial statement before me. I know Government have no secret funds before them. As a member of the highest legislative body, I am not going to favour a measure which is to be applied only to a certain section of the people nor am I going to play to the gallery.

Mr. S. Piraviperumal Pillai : May I know then why the member did not bring in a resolution to this effect.

Mr. Kochikal P. Balakrishnan Tampi : When I publish my journal at the end of my life, I am sure there will be an entry in regard to that in that journal. That will be a posthumous journal too.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

President : It shall be awaited with interest.

Mr. Kochikal P. Balakrishnan Tampi : The people are certainly suffering. There is no disguising the fact that the people are suffering. All the people of Travancore are suffering. There are certain alleviating features in Nanjinad which we in other parts of Travancore cannot claim. At least it is granted that there is the habit of plain speaking, blunt speaking which will pull them through many difficulties and most of all there is another—the threat of an exodus to the frontier. Unfortunately, our constituency is far away from the frontier and there is no possibility there of an exodus, except an exodus to the Arabian sea, so far as I can see. Therefore there is nothing like a physical consolation so to speak to the people of Kuttanad and Onattukara. Not only that. Neither is there the physiological advantage of the unity of the people as well as the habit of plain speaking. My area is not further honoured by visits of such people of retentive memory as the honourable member for Chirayinkil whose visit to Nanjinad synchronised with the visit of our Dewan Sahib. I appeal to Government that, if they propose to do anything in the matter, it must not be of a piecemeal nature. Government must view this request for remission of tax in Nanjinad as part of a big question. If there is any place which is more assessed than others, the Government ought to look into that when the next settlement operations are undertaken and not at the present time. If Government is going to do anything in the reduction of taxation, they must view the lot of the less pretentious people, the less vociferous people of the rest of Travancore as well. With these words, I oppose the resolution.

Mr. G. Narayana Aiyar : Sir, I support the resolution and, in supporting the resolution, I have a few words to add. We have to see what is the principle of taxation followed in Travancore. If there is anything opposed to that principle in the case of Nanjinad certainly they are entitled to ample relief. Section 16 of the Proclamation of 1061 clearly states the principle that ought to be followed in the matter of taxation. There it is stated that from the estimated gross produce a deduction will be made for the cost of seed and labour. From the remainder, 1/3 will be subtracted for the cultivator's share and the remaining 2/3 will be divided in the proportion of 6/10 to Government and 4/10 to the land-holder. We have to see whether such a margin is left in this case.

President : You talk of the State as a whole.

Mr. G. Narayana Aiyar : We are concerned at least with a particular locality, and we should see whether the principle of Section 16 of the Regulation can be worked there safely without prejudice to the interests of the ryots.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

The Economic Depression Enquiry Committee submitted its report only in 1931. There they specifically say that the total cost of seed labour for two crops in the particular locality is, as has been stated by the mover, Rs. 84 and the yield 24 *kottas* of paddy for one acre for 2 crops together. There they admit, although the price of 1 *kotta* of paddy was Rs. 9 in the earlier days, on the date they submitted the report it was only Rs. 5. Now it is very clear that the price of 1 *kotta* is Rs. 3 1/2, as has been well said by the mover. If you take into calculation the yield admitted by the committee, and if you calculate at the rate of Rs. 3 1/2 per *kotta* the total yield from one acre will be Rs. 84. Straw worth Rs. 10 will also be available. Thus the total yield will be Rs. 94. Now, the cost of cultivation is Rs. 84 as admitted by the Committee. The balance left is only Rs. 10. On the principle of Section 16, a third has to be given for the cultivator's share. If you deduct a third from Rs. 10, we have got only a balance of Rs 6 2/3. The average tax per acre for double crop lands in Nanjinad even according to the admission of the Committee will be about Rs. 26-12 as. But deducting the cultivator's share, we have got only Rs. 6 2/3, while the owner is asked to pay a tax of Rs. 26 and odd. Where is he to go for this? He is permitted to have 2/3 of the remainder for his share of investment. Here there is not even sufficient fund to pay the Government. As such it is very clear that conditions have risen to such a climax that it will be very difficult for the landholder to cultivate the land. In this connection I would like to bring to the notice of Government that non-payment of tax in Travancore is not due to any political cause. It is sheer inability on the part of the cultivators to pay. Want of sufficient out-turn is the sole reason. As such when we say that there is no margin of profit left to the cultivator, even according to the admitted principle laid down by Government, it is high time that Government should come in and relieve the real sufferers by granting sufficient remission of tax. In this connection it will be advisable to state that the major part of Nanjinad had not the benefit of the principle of fixing 6 chs. as the price of 1 *parah* of paddy for the purpose of payment of tax. All paddy payable as tax seems to have been valued at 11 chs. per *parah*. That is another disadvantage.

Mr. K George: When was it that all the paddy payable as tax was converted into money?

Mr. G. Narayana Aiyar: I do not know. It was about 1081. The tax the people had to pay was converted into 11 chs. per *parah*.

Mr. K. George: Was it the dry assessment or the wet assessment that was charged?

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

Mr. G Narayana Aiyar: I think it is the wet assessment.

It is very clear from the above statement that there is absolutely no margin left to the ryots for the payment of tax. We may for the time being grant that we do not want any out-turn from our lands for our investments. But should it not be sufficient to pay the tax? So I support the motion and the relief prayed for is one to which they are entitled.

Mr. K. George: Sir, although Mr. Arumukham Pillai wanted to bring into his resolution two separate topics viz., the reduction of tax on all wet lands in Nanjinad as well as the reduction of the water-cess, I find from his speech that he devoted his observation entirely to the question of reduction of land tax.

Mr. V. S. Arumukham Pillai: May I know whether water-rate is not included in the burden on land?

President: You go on with the reply.

Mr. K. George: He elaborated on the hardships experienced by the people of Nanjinad at the present time owing to the fall in the price of paddy. In doing so he also dealt at length on the high rate of settlement tax which had been imposed in Nanjinad and he went on to say how, during the pre-historic times, the people of Nanjinad had been oppressed and what devices they resorted to save themselves from oppression. Now, I do not think it at all necessary for me to enter into the historical causes which led to the present rates of taxation in Nanjinad. I do not deny the fact that the rate of taxation on wet lands in Nanjinad is a bit higher than the rates obtaining elsewhere. This is admitted by Government themselves in the course of the order which they issued on the final Settlement Report. It says that Nanjinad taluks had the highest rates ranging from Rs. 1 1/4 to Rs. 17 per acre of single crop wet lands. Now to say that the taxation is uniformly Rs. 25 is not to say what is a fact. It ranges, I believe, according to the *tharam*. There are 15 *tharams* and the tax for the lowest is Rs. 1 1/4 and for the highest Rs. 17 per single crop wet land. For double crop lands we add 50 per cent. more. So it is only in the case of the highest *tharam* that the tax comes to a large figure. It comes to Rs. 25 and odd for the first or highest *tharam*. It will be about Rs. 2 or so for the lowest *tharam*. So we cannot argue on the basis of the highest *tharam* and say that taxation as a whole in Nanjinad is excessive. No doubt, the fall in the price of paddy has seriously affected the Nanjinadians as it has affected the people of the whole State.

Mr. K. Madhavan Pillai (*Trivandrum cum Nedumangad*): May I know the average tax per acre of wet land in Nanjinad?

Mr. K. George: It will be on an average Rs. 12 per acre.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

As my friend Mr. Balakrishnan Tampi was saying, this question of reduction of tax in Nanjinad is part of the larger problem which is now under consideration by the Government namely, the question of remission of tax in the whole State. During the discussion of the Land Revenue Demand, the mover of this resolution, Mr. Arumukham Pillai himself, raised the question of reduction of 50% of the land tax; and the subject was discussed at great length on the floor of this House. In reply to the debate I stated on behalf of the Government that the question of reduction of tax will immediately engage the attention of Government; and, I can assure Mr. Arumukham Pillai that the question of relief to the Nanjinad agriculturists will be considered along with the question of relief to the other parts of the State.

Mr. K. P. Nilakanta Pillai: If this resolution is to be given effect to what would be the financial loss to Government?

Mr. K. George: I am sorry I have not got those figures now.

During the discussion, Sir, both Mr. Arumukham Pillai and Mr. G. Narayana Aiyar referred to the general principles of taxation. No alteration in the scale of taxation is possible now. Such alteration is practicable only at a re-settlement. Mr. Narayana Aiyar referred to certain principles enunciated in the Settlement Proclamation. If any variation from those principles has taken place at the time of the settlement it can be re-examined only at the time of the next settlement. We cannot go into the principles of the settlement, or into the present rate of taxation with reference to such principles, apart from a re-settlement. But, as I said, the question of remission of taxes in Nanjinad, along with the other tracts of the State, will receive the serious consideration of the Government shortly. When last time I gave this assurance, Mr. Arumukham Pillai withdrew his motion. I hope now also he will see his way to withdraw his resolution.

Mr. V. S. Arumukham Pillai: I press the resolution, Sir. The learned Land Revenue Commissioner referred to the fact that I have not mentioned anything about water-rate. Sir, at present, water-rate is realised from the ryots along with the land tax, and it is part of the burden on the land. As such, there was no necessity to make any special mention about it.

With regard to the amount of tax, the learned Commissioner was telling us that I was not quite correct when I stated that the tax was uniformly Rs. 25 per acre. Sir, I was referring to the first class or *tharam* of land for which the rate is Rs. 25. If I were to take the highest rate, I should have mentioned the case of lands for which the assessment is Rs. 35 per acre. I mentioned, as example, the assessment of Rs. 25 per acre because the bulk of the lands in Nanjinad bear that rate of assessment.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

[Mr. V. S. Arumukham Pillai.]

In view of the fact that the Land Revenue Commissioner himself has admitted that the rate of assessment in Nanjinad is very high, and in view of the present serious economic depression, I press the resolution.

The resolution was put to vote and lost.

Mr. V. S. Arumukham Pillai: I demand a poll.

A poll was taken, and the House divided as follows :—

AYES—15.

1	Mr. V. S. Arumukham Pillai		9	Mr. N. K. Padmanabha Pillai	
2	,,	J. John Kattakayam	10	,,	P. Padmanabhan Tampi
3	,,	K. N. Kesavan Namputiripad	11	,,	M. N. Paramesvaran Pillai
4	,,	M. P. Madhavan Pillai	12	,,	S. Piraviperumal Pillai
5	,,	G. Narayana Aiyar	13	,,	K. Rama Varma Raja
6	,,	M. N. Narayana Menon	14	,,	Kattiyattu Sivarama Panickar
7	,,	K. P. Nilakanta Pillai			
8	,,	K. Padmanabha Panickar	15	,,	A. N. Visvanatha Pillai

NOES—16.

1	Mr. Kochikal P. Balakrishnan Tampi		9	Mr. R. Nilakanta Pillai	
2	,,	K. George	10	,,	Kayalam Paramesvaran Pillai
3	,,	C. M. Joseph	11	Rao Bahadur N. Ramanuja Aiyangar	
4	,,	A. Kumara Pillai			
5	Rao Sahib Dr. N. Kunjan Pillai		12	Mr. Komilezhathu Sankaran	
6	Mr. Tariatu Kunjitommen		13	,,	James Simpson
			14	,,	R. M. Statham
7	,,	L. A. Lampard	15	,,	K. K. Thomas
8	,,	C. O. Madhavan	16	,,	G. B. E. Truscott

NEUTRALS—5.

1	Mr. S. Adam Sait		4	Mr. K. Madhavan Pillai	
2	,,	M. Govindan	5	,,	H. O. L. Marikkar
3	,,	Jacob Hassan Sait			

The resolution was declared lost.

At this stage the President left the Chair and Mr. Kochikal P. Balakrishnan Tampi, one of the Panel of Chairmen, presided.

Committee to examine the grievances of land-holders in Nanjinad.

Mr. V. S. Arumukham Pillai: Sir, I beg to move the following resolution :

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly